

***OFFICE OF THE SCIENCE ADVISOR
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
BROAD AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR
CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, AND/OR MEETINGS***

Table of Contents

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Synopsis of Program
- Award Information
- Eligibility Information
- Application Materials
- Contact Person(s)

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

- Introduction
- Background
- Authority and Regulations
- Specific Areas of Interest/Expected Outputs and Outcomes
- References

II. AWARD INFORMATION

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

- Eligible Applicants
- Cost Sharing
- Other
- Special Requirements
- Threshold Criteria

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- Internet Address to Request Application Package
- Content and Form of Application Submission
- Submission Dates and Times
- Funding Restrictions
- Other Submission Requirements

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

- Criteria
- Review and Selection Process

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

- Award Notices
- Administrative and National Policy Requirements
- Reporting

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

OVERVIEW-SUMMARY OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing this Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) soliciting applications from eligible applicants for conducting, conferences, workshops, and/or meetings (hereinafter the term “conferences” means conferences, workshops, and/or meetings). The opening date for this BAA is January 19, 2006 and it will close on January 18, 2007. The Agency will make funding decisions on a quarterly basis beginning approximately April 18, 2006, and thereafter approximately every three months. The next funding decisions will be approximately on July 17, 2006, October 16, 2006, and January 16, 2007. However, in order for a proposal to be considered for funding, it must be received by EPA no later than **three months prior to the start of the conference for which the applicant is requesting EPA funding under this BAA and no later than January 18, 2007.**

BAA Number: EPA-OSA-ORD-0601

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.510 - Surveys, Studies, Investigations and Special Purpose Grants within the Office of Research and Development.

Synopsis of Program:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is soliciting applications from eligible applicants for the planning, arranging, administering, and conducting of conferences in the areas of (1) EPA mission related issues connected to protecting, human health and safeguarding the natural environment; (2) advancing the scientific and technical research that promotes environmental protection; (3) exploring current and emerging issues of importance to environmental protection; and/or (4) encouraging collaboration among the nation’s best scientists and engineers in academia, business and nonprofit research institutes.

Award Information:

Anticipated Type of Award: Grant or Cooperative Agreement

Estimated Number of Awards Under this BAA: Approximately 25 awards depending upon the amount of any individual award.

Anticipated Funding Amount: Office of the Science Advisor (OSA), Office of Research and Development may have up to an estimated \$150,000 for awards under this BAA; other ORD offices may have additional funding of up to an estimated \$600,000 available for awards under this BAA—therefore the total estimated amount available for all awards under this BAA may be approximately \$750,000.

This announcement will remain open until January 18, 2007, after which EPA will no longer accept proposals. The Agency will make funding decisions on a quarterly basis beginning approximately April 18, 2006, and approximately every three months thereafter (e.g., the next funding decisions will be approximately on July 17, 2006, October 16, 2006, and January 16, 2007).

Potential Funding per Grant:

EPA may award funding under this BAA in the following two categories:

1. Meeting and workshop support up to \$25,000 per agreement including direct and indirect costs. This category is for major support of small scale, focused meetings and workshops on a specific subject or subjects, or for partial support of a larger conference.
2. Large conference support up to \$75,000 per agreement including direct and indirect costs. This category is for major support of broader conferences that include a wide range of subjects relating to environmental research.

EPA will not consider applications for less than \$5,000.

All grants and cooperative agreements will have a duration of up to 1 year to provide for follow-up activities such as publication of reports and proceedings. Cost-sharing is not required for awards under this BAA.

Eligibility Information:

States, territories and possessions, and Tribal nations of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, local governments, other public or private nonprofit institutions, are eligible to apply. Universities and educational institutions must be subject to OMB Circular A-21. Profit-making firms are not eligible to receive grants from the EPA under this program.

Application Materials: See Section IV for further information.

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Introduction

Research in advancing sound science at EPA is administered by OSA, Office of Research and Development which is based at EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C. OSA, Office of Research and Development's mission includes supporting leading-edge research to stimulate the sound use of science and technology to fulfill EPA's mission to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment. One way to accomplish this is to provide broad informational technical support through conferences, which further environmental research by communicating ideas, knowledge, expertise, innovation and creativity in solving complex environmental issues.

Background

EPA's mission is to protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment-air, water, and land-on which life depends. The EPA Strategic Plan (EPA 2001) <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/epastrat.pdf> emphasizes the role of science in accomplishing the agency's mission: "science is the foundation that supports all of EPA's work, providing us with the knowledge and technologies to detect, abate, and avoid environmental problems." In fact, one of the agency's goals is "sound science, improved understanding, and innovation." EPA has sought to support its goal of sound science by establishing a research program encompassing

both human-health and environmental disciplines. The EPA Strategic Plan (EPA 2001) can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/epastrat.pdf>.

The National Research Council publication, *Building a Foundation for Sound Environmental Decisions*, recommended that EPA's research program maintain a balance between problem-driven research, targeted at understanding and solving particular identified environmental problems and reducing the uncertainties associated with them, and core research, which aims to provide broader, more generic information to help improve understanding relevant to environmental problems for the present and the future.

Depending on the conference, awards made under this BAA may support any of the following specific Strategic Goals, and their Objectives and Sub-objectives from EPA's Strategic Plan including:

Goal 1: Clean Air and Global Climate Change, Objective 1.6: Enhance Science and Research, Sub-objective 1.6.2: Conduct Air Pollution Research

Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.3: Enhance Science and Research, Sub-objective 2.3.2: Conduct Leading-Edge Research

Goal 3: Land Preservation and Restoration, Objective 3.3: Enhance Science and Research, Sub-objective 3.3.2: Conduct Research to Support Land Activities

Goal 4: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Objective 4.5: Enhance Science and Research, Sub-objective 4.5.2: Conduct Relevant Research

Goal 5: Compliance and Environmental Stewardship, Objective 5.4: Enhance Science and Research, Sub-objective 5.4.2: Conducting Research

The EPA's Strategic Plan can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/2003sp.pdf>. Each agreement under this BAA will reference the appropriate Goals, Objectives and Sub-Objectives.

Authority

The statutory authority for this BAA and the resulting awards as appropriate are contained in the following Statutory Authorities:

Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442, 42 U.S.C. 300j-1

Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10, 15 U.S.C. 2609

Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20, 7 U.S.C. 136r

Clean Air Act, Section 103, 42 U.S.C. 7403

Clean Water Act, Section 104, 33 U.S.C. 1254

Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001, 42 U.S.C. 6901

Section 311 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, 42 U.S.C. 9660.

Special Requirement

The awards under this BAA may involve the collection of “Geospatial Information,” which include information that identifies the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed features or boundaries on the Earth or applications, tools, and hardware associated with the generation, maintenance, or distribution of such information. This information may be derived from, among other things, Geographic Positioning System (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data.

Specific Research Areas of Interest/Expected Outputs and Outcomes

I. Outputs:

The expected outputs for any award under this BAA include but are not limited to:

Human Health and Environmental Outputs -

Attendance of scientists and engineers at conferences that advance environmental science.

Papers presented on research relating to environmental protection.

Report proceedings published in Journals or Publications.

Identification of potential research needs and opportunities to overcome obstacles affecting Human Health and Environmental issues.

Identification of collaborative efforts with EPA that illustrate novel approaches to Human Health and Environmental protection.

High quality, timely, and relevant scientific information to support EPA’s mission to protect Human Health and the Environment.

The specific expected outputs will be included in each award under this BAA.

These outputs apply to all awards under this BAA regardless of the conference.

II. Outcomes:

The expected outcomes of awards under this agreement include but are not limited to:

Human Health and Environmental Outcomes -

Support one of EPA’s 5 Goals in the Strategic Plan for protecting Human Health and the Environment.

Improve the quality and quantity of research into scientific and engineering issues affecting Human Health and the Environment.

Support the best available scientific and economic information to establish priorities and make decisions.

Further the public interest by advancing the state of scientific knowledge of issues affecting Human Health and the Environment.

Innovation in ways to address high-priority environmental problems making full use of technological information.

Enhance interdisciplinary dialogue on environmental research with cross-cutting applications in both basic and applied sciences.

The specific expected outcomes will be included in each award under this BAA.

These outcomes apply to all awards under this BAA regardless of the type of conference.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

The OSA, Office of Research and Development may have up to an estimated \$150,000 for awards under this BAA; other ORD offices may have additional funding of up to an estimated \$600,000 available for awards under this BAA—therefore the total estimated amount available for all awards under this BAA may be approximately \$750,000. The procedures in this BAA will apply to all awards to be made under the BAA regardless of which ORD office is the source of funding for the awards. The BAA closes on January 18, 2007, after which EPA will no longer accept proposals. EPA will consider funding requests in two categories.

1. Meeting and workshop support up to \$25,000 per agreement including direct and indirect costs. This category is for major support of small scale, focused meetings and workshops on a specific subject or subjects, or for partial support of a larger conference.
2. Large conference support up to \$75,000 per agreement including direct and indirect costs. This category is for major support of broader conferences that include a wide range of subjects relating to environmental research.

EPA will not consider applications for less than \$5,000.

Individual awards will be fully funded, depending on the availability of funds and the quality of the proposals the Agency receives. EPA anticipates awarding up to approximately 25 assistance agreements under this announcement, depending upon the amount of the agreements. The total project period for an application submitted in response to this BAA may not exceed 1 year. EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this BAA.

Agency policy prevents EPA Laboratory scientists and engineers from providing individual applicants with information that would provide them with an unfair competitive advantage. Consequently, EPA laboratory scientists and engineers will not review, comment, advise, or provide technical assistance to investigators preparing applications in response to this BAA, or discuss in any manner how the Agency will apply the published evaluation criteria for this competition.

EPA intends to fund grants or cooperative agreements under this announcement. Agency scientists and engineers will not be substantially involved in grants receiving EPA funding. On the other hand if the Agency awards a cooperative agreement, EPA scientists and engineers will be substantially involved in the activities receiving EPA funding, under terms and conditions agreed upon by EPA and recipient.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

States, territories and possessions, and Tribal nations of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, local governments, and other public or private nonprofit institutions, are eligible to apply. Universities and educational institutions must be subject to OMB Circular A-21. Profit-making firms are not eligible to receive grants from the EPA under this program.

Eligible nonprofit organizations include any organizations that meet the definition of nonprofit in OMB Circular A-122. However, nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible to apply.

National laboratories funded by Federal Agencies (Federally-Funded Research and Development Centers, “FFRDCs”) may not apply. FFRDC employees may cooperate or collaborate with eligible applicants within the limits imposed by applicable legislation and regulations. They may participate in planning, conducting, and analyzing the research directed by the applicant, but may not direct projects on behalf of the applicant organization. The institution, organization, or governance receiving the award may provide funds through its grant from the EPA to an FFRDC for research personnel, supplies, equipment, and other expenses directly related to the research. However, salaries for permanent FFRDC employees may not be provided through this mechanism.

Federal Agencies may not apply. Federal employees are not eligible to serve in a principal leadership role on a grant, and may not receive salaries or augment their Agency’s appropriations (e.g. travel funding) in other ways through grants made by this program.

Potential applicants who are uncertain of their eligibility should contact Michael Bender, phone (202) 564-6829, email: bender.michael@epa.gov

Cost sharing

Institutional cost-sharing is not required. (However, please be aware of the leveraging factor in Section V.)

Special Requirements

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a consortium and submit a single application for this assistance agreement. The application must identify which organization will be the recipient of the assistance agreement and which organizations(s) will be subawardees of the recipient. Subgrants or subawards may be used to fund consortiums among universities and colleges, non profit organizations and governmental entities. Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products to carry out its grant or cooperative agreement. For profit organizations are not eligible subgrant recipients under this announcement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of “subaward” at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or “subgrant” at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions.

Threshold Eligibility Criteria

All of the following criteria must be met by time of submission in order for a proposal to receive funding consideration under this BAA. Only those proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking a criterion in Section V of this BAA.

1. The applicant must demonstrate that it is eligible to apply for financial assistance under this BAA.
2. The applicant’s proposed conference, or the component of it to which the proposal for EPA funding applies, must focus on (1) EPA mission related issues connected to protecting, human health and safeguarding the natural environment; (2) advancing the scientific and technical research that promotes environmental protection; (3) exploring current and emerging issues of importance to environmental protection and/or; (4) encouraging collaboration among the nation’s best scientists and engineers in academia, business and nonprofit research institutes.
3. The applicant must include a plan (see Section IV.) to make available to the scientific community all papers, articles and similar publications (e.g. proceedings) from conferences supported by financial assistance awarded under this BAA. The materials must be available in a format and with documentation such that they may be used by others in the scientific community. Posting on a publicly available web site is an acceptable means of meeting this requirement.

4. In order for an application/proposal package to be considered, it must be received by EPA no later than **three months prior to the start of the conference for which the applicant is requesting funding under this BAA and no later than January 18, 2007.**

Applications/proposals received after this date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

5. EPA will not consider applications for less than \$5,000.

6. Applications/proposals that do not substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to parts of the application/proposal package, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

You may submit either a paper application or an electronic application (but not both) for this announcement. Instructions for both forms of submission follow.

Internet Address to Request Application Package

For paper and electronic applications, use the application package available at https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html (see “Submission Instructions for Electronic Applications”).

Content and Form of Application Submission

The application is made by submitting the materials described below. **It is essential that the application contain all information requested and be submitted in the formats described.**

A. Standard Form 424

The applicant must complete form SF424. This form will be the *first page* of the application. Instructions for completion of the SF424 are included with the form. The form must contain the original (or electronic) signature of an authorized representative of the applying institution. Please note that both the Principal Investigator and an administrative contact must be identified in Item 5 of the SF424.

Applicants must provide a “Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System” (DUNS) number in Item 5 when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations may receive a DUNS number by calling 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting the web site at <http://www.dnb.com>.

B. Key Contacts

The applicant must complete the “Key Contacts” form as the second page of the application; the Key Contacts continuation page is also available at:

https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html. Please make certain that all contact information is accurate. For both paper and electronic applications, an email will be sent by EPA to the applicant’s Administrative Contact to acknowledge receipt of the application. The email will be sent from support@grants.gov; email to this address will not be accepted. If you do not receive an email acknowledgment within 30 days of the submission closing date, immediately contact the Agency Contact listed in this solicitation. See “Submission Instructions for Electronic Applications” for additional information regarding acknowledgment of receipt of electronically submitted applications. **Please note:** Due to often lengthy delays in delivery, it is especially important that you monitor EPA’s confirmation of receipt of your application when using regular mail.

C. Table of Contents

Provide a list of the major subdivisions of the application indicating the page number on which each section begins. (A Table of Contents is not required for electronic submissions.)

D. Abstract (1 page)

The abstract is a very important document. Therefore, it is critical that the abstract accurately describes the conference information being proposed and conveys all the essential elements. The abstract must include the information described below (1-5).

1. Title: Use the exact title of your conference as it appears in the application.
2. Organizers: List the individuals responsible for the content of the area(s) of your conference, workshop, or meeting for which you are seeking EPA funding. Provide a web site URL or an email contact address for additional information.
3. Description of applicant: The organization applying for assistance must be clearly identified, and provide information demonstrating that the organization is an eligible applicant in accordance with Section III of this BAA.
4. Project Period: Show the proposed project beginning and ending dates for the EPA grant. Identify the date(s) of the conference, workshop or meeting, as well as the date(s) that your organization would begin expending EPA funds for planning and other pre-conference activities. The ending date for the EPA grant is the date your organization will submit the conference proceedings and final report(s) for the grant to EPA.
5. Project Cost: Show the total dollars requested from the EPA (include direct and indirect costs for all grant years). Project Summary: Describe (a) the conference activities (e.g. panel or paper presentation(s), technology demonstration) for which you are seeking EPA funding. Please note that EPA can only fund activities that fall under the environmental research grant authorities described in Section I of this BAA; (b) the expected environmental outputs and results of the project in the terms specified in Section I of this BAA.

E. Conference Plan, Quality Assurance Statement, and Response to Evaluation Criteria

Conference Plan (10 pages)

Applications should focus on a limited number of objectives that adequately and clearly demonstrate that they meet the BAA requirements, and state the results you expect to achieve.

This plan must not exceed ten (10) consecutively numbered 8.5x11-inch pages of single-spaced, standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins. The plan must provide the following information:

1. Objectives: List the objectives of the proposed conference, and briefly state why the intended effort is important to environmental research. This section should also include any background or introductory information that would help explain the objectives of the effort.
2. Approach/Activities: Outline the techniques that you intend to use in meeting the objectives stated above.
3. Expected Results, Benefits, Outputs, and Outcomes: Describe the results you expect to achieve during the conference, (outputs) and the benefits of the results (outcomes) of the conference (see Section I) and how you will track and measure your progress towards achieving the expected outputs/outcomes. This section should also discuss how the results link to EPA's Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture, and will lead to solutions to environmental problems and improve the public's ability to protect the environment and human health. A clear, concise description will help EPA understand the merits of the conference.
4. Responses to Evaluation Criteria:
Applicants must provide information relating to each of the evaluation criteria contained in Section V of this BAA and as described below.

a. Environmental Research Expertise- applications must describe the applicants' skills and the qualities of the institution they are associated with, including, as appropriate:

- 1) Academic publications and other academic work related to the subject matter of the conference;
- 2) Expertise of speakers and panelists in the specific topics proposed for conferences. If applicants propose conferences whose specific topics will be determined annually by a committee, then they should demonstrate their ability to attract key experts;
- 3) Why the applicant is 1) an appropriate representative for the research issue(s) addressed in the proposal, 2) likely to be viewed as an authority on the subject, or 3) able to establish linkages with an organization that is an appropriate representative or authority on the subject;

b. Programmatic Capability - The capability of the applicant to successfully carry out the proposed effort taking into account the following factors relating to the applicant's:

- 1) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded efforts similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed effort. Applicants should provide information on successful project completions, compliance with reporting requirements,

applicants must disclose results of audits conducted by EPA's Office of Inspector General, other federal agencies, or state, local or tribal oversight entities. Applicants who have not received Federal financial assistance may discuss their experience with managing funds from private foundations, private companies, state or local governments or other sources. Applicants must provide contacts for EPA to obtain additional information.

2) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports.

3) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the effort, and

4) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the effort.

Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, EPA will consider information provided by applicants and may consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant).

c. Cost-Effectiveness - Applicants must discuss how effectively conference funds will be used (i.e., value of the conference) in terms of the expected audience size, the number of speakers and sessions, and the length of the conference. For example, how do these numbers improve the productivity of a conference and result in good environmental outcomes relative to larger or smaller numbers?

d. Leveraging EPA funds through: 1) additional funding from other sources, 2) voluntary matching or cost-sharing from the applicant or a donor, 3) in-kind contributions from the key personnel or 4) collaborating with other institutions to achieve cost effectiveness. Voluntary cost shares or matches must be included in the project budget as a planned project costs. Please note that applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g., HUD's Community Development Block Grants). Applicants who will seek funding from other sources but do not intend to include these funds as a voluntary match or cost share in the budget must explain how these other funds will be used. Applicants relying on additional funding from other sources should support their expectations (e.g., based on past successes in obtaining multiple funding sources). Fund-raising costs are not allowable costs under EPA grants.

Please note that applications for multiple conferences, large conferences, and two or three-day conferences must justify the benefits of EPA funding the series, size or duration of the conferences. Submit a separate proposal for each conference you are proposing.

e. Social Value and Environmental Outcomes: Applicants must discuss the environmental benefits the non-Federal scientific community will receive by addressing the following matters:

1) how the conference advances environmental sciences and engineering, for example, applicants should explain the environmental relevance of the topic and, as appropriate, the significance of the knowledge gap being addressed by the subject matter of the research conferences and the emerging topics that will be covered at the conference.

2) how the conference increases the quality of research in the field of Human Health and the Environment.

3) how the research presentation and training tools included in the conference meets the needs of a broad range of stakeholders.

4) how the applicants plan tracks and measures progress towards achieving the expected outputs/outcomes.

f. Expected Results, Benefits, Outputs, and Outcomes: The extent to which the applicant effectively describes the results expected to be achieved during the conference, (outputs) and the benefits of the results (outcomes) and how they will track whether they are achieving the outputs/outcomes. In addition, this factor will evaluate how the results link to EPA's Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture, and lead to solutions to environmental problems and improve the public's ability to protect the environment and human health. A clear, concise description will help OSA understand the merits of the conference.

g. Important Attachments: References cited are in addition to the 10-page Conference Plan limit. Appendices (i.e., additional useful information, web sites, Abbreviations and Acronyms) may be included but must remain within the 10-page limit.

Quality Assurance Statement (2 pages in addition to the 10-page conference plan)

For any conference involving the use of secondary data, provide a Statement that addresses the treatment of secondary data such as: The applicant shall address the quality of secondary data used for materials presented at the conference, or otherwise introduced for inclusion in the conference proceedings. Secondary data is defined as the review or use of someone else's environmental or health data that was developed for a different purpose. This includes the data used for citations from literature searches, hard copies, and computer data bases.

For each item below, either present the required information, reference the specific location of the information in the Conference Plan, or provide a justification of why the item does not apply to the proposed conference.

1. Identify the individual who will be responsible for the quality assurance and quality control aspects of the secondary data. [Quality assurance (QA) is an integrated system of management activities involving planning, implementation, documentation, assessment, and improvement to ensure that a process or item is of the type and quality needed. Quality control (QC) is the system of technical activities that measures the attributes and performance of a process or item against defined standards to verify that they meet the stated requirements.]

2. Discuss the activities to be performed for determining acceptable data quality. Such criteria may be expressed in terms of precision, accuracy, representativeness, completeness, and

comparability or in terms of data quality objectives or acceptance and evaluation criteria. These criteria also must be applied to determine the acceptability of existing, or “secondary,” data to be used in the project, and their use discussed. (In this context, secondary data may be defined as data previously collected for other purposes or from other sources.)

Page allowances for the following sections are in addition to those allowed for the Conference Plan and Quality Assurance Statement.

Data Plan (2 pages in addition to the 10-page conference plan)

The application must include a plan to make available all data (including primary and secondary/existing data) from observations, analyses, or model development collected or used under an agreement awarded as a result of this BAA in a format and with documentation/metadata such that they may be used by others in the scientific community. Applicants who plan to develop or enhance databases containing proprietary or restricted information must provide a strategy, within the two pages, to make the data widely available, while protecting privacy or property rights.

F. Budget and Budget Justification

Budget

Prepare a budget table using the guidance and format found at: https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html, and select “All required forms.” Please note that cost-sharing or matching is not required. However, if your organization chooses to offer cost-sharing you must provide a brief statement concerning cost-sharing with the budget justification, and estimated dollar amounts must be included in the appropriate categories in the budget table. In addition, EPA will consider the extent to which Agency funding compliments funds your organization receives from Federal and non-Federal sources as an evaluation factor.

Budget Justification (2 pages in addition to the 10-page conference plan)

Describe the basis for calculating the personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual support, and other costs identified in the itemized budget. The budget justification should not exceed two consecutively numbered 8.5x11-inch pages of single-spaced, standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins.

Budget information should be supported at the level of detail described below:

1. Personnel: List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.
2. Fringe Benefits: Identify the percentage used and the basis for its computation.
3. Travel: Specify the estimated number of trips, locations, and other costs for each type of travel. Explain the need for any travel outside the United States.

4. Equipment: Identify all tangible, non-expendable personal property to be purchased that has an estimated cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. (Personal property items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 are considered supplies.)
5. Supplies: "Supplies" means tangible property other than "equipment." Identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies).
6. Contractual: Identify the amount of EPA funds you anticipate spending for contracts and consulting services and specify the purpose of these agreements. Please note that all procurement of goods and services are subject to the competitive procurement procedures of 40 CFR Part 30 or Part 31, as applicable.
7. Other: List each item in sufficient detail for the EPA to determine the reasonableness of its cost relative to the conference, to be undertaken. Please identify any proposed subawards of financial assistance (subgrants) in this category.
8. Indirect Costs: If indirect costs are included in the budget, indicate the approved rate and base with an explanation of how indirect costs were calculated.

G. Resumes and Current and Pending Support

Resumes: Provide resumes for each individual who will have a significant role in carrying out the portion(s) of the conference EPA will fund. Examples include the project manager, speakers or panelists, and paper presenters. The resume for each individual must not exceed two consecutively numbered 8.5x11-inch pages of single-spaced, standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins.

H. Guidelines, Limitations, and Additional Requirements

Confidentiality

By submitting an application in response to this solicitation, the applicant grants the EPA permission to make limited disclosures of the application to technical reviewers both within and outside the Agency for the express purpose of assisting the Agency with evaluating the application. Information from a pending or unsuccessful application will be kept confidential to the fullest extent allowed under law; information from a successful application may be publicly disclosed to the extent permitted by law.

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of the application/proposal as confidential business information (e.g., intellectual property). EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, the EPA is not required to make an inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

Letters of Intent/Letters of Support

Letters of intent to provide resources for the proposed conference are limited to one brief paragraph committing the availability of a resource (e.g., use of a person's time or equipment)

as described in the Conference Plan. Letters of intent are to be included as an addition to the budget justification documents.

Principal investigators may believe that letters of support from local constituencies contribute to the relevance of their proposal. All letters that do not commit a resource vital to success of the proposal are considered letters of support. Letters of intent that exceed one brief paragraph and letters of support are considered part of the Conference Plan and included in the 10-page Conference Plan limit.

Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) Process

The BAA's opening date is January 19, 2006 and it will remain open until January 18, 2007, after which submissions will no longer be accepted. In order for a proposal/application package to be considered, it must be received by EPA no later than three months prior to the start of the conference for which the applicant is requesting funding and no later than January 18, 2007. Applicants will be ranked and evaluated as described in Section V and selection decisions will be made as stated in Section V.

Intergovernmental Review

Research grant programs are excluded from coverage under Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review) as referenced in EPA's Federal Register Notice from April 29, 2004.

Submission Dates and Times

For paper copy submissions, the original and two (2) copies of the complete proposal/application package (3 in all), and one (1) additional copy of the abstract, **must be received by EPA no later than three months prior to the start of the conference for which funding is being requested and no later than 4:00 pm Eastern Time on January 18, 2007**, the solicitation closing date. Electronic applications **must be transferred to grants.gov no later than three months prior to the start of the conference for which funding is being requested and no later than 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time on January 18, 2007**, the solicitation closing date. It should be noted that this schedule may be changed without prior notification because of factors that were not anticipated at the time of announcement. In the case of a change in the required application closing date, a modification will be posted on www.grants.gov. Packages received after the date above will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

Solicitation Closing Date: January 18, 2007, 4:00 pm Eastern Time
Earliest Anticipated Start Date: April 18, 2006

Funding Restrictions

The funding mechanism for all awards issued under this solicitation will consist of assistance agreements from the EPA. All award decisions are subject to the availability of funds. In accordance with the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act, 31 U.S.C. 6301 et seq., the primary purpose of a grant is to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by federal statute, rather than acquisition for the direct benefit or use of the Agency.

If you wish to submit applications for awards under more than one BAA or announcement, you must ensure that the research proposed in each application is significantly different from any other that has been submitted to the EPA or from any other grant you are currently receiving from the EPA or other federal government agency. Under this BAA, applicants may submit more than one proposal but they must submit a separate proposal for each conference for which they are seeking funding for.

Collaborative applications involving more than one institution must be submitted as a single administrative package from one of the institutions involved.

Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.

Moreover, naming a specific contractor in the application does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements. Also, the regulations contain limitations on consultant compensation.

Other Submission Requirements

You may submit either a paper application/proposal package or an electronic one (but not both) for this announcement.

Submission Instructions for Paper Application/Proposal Packages

The application/proposal packages and abstract must be prepared in accordance with these instructions. The original, signed copy of the package must not be permanently bound or stapled in any way. The other two (2) required copies of the package should be secured with paper or binder clips or secure staples.

Because of security concerns, application/proposal packages cannot be personally delivered. They must be sent through regular mail, express mail, or a major courier.

The following address must be used for regular mail:

Michael Bender
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

ORD/OSA (8105R) Rm 41243
Washington, DC 20460

The following address must be used for express mail and couriers:

Michael Bender
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
ORD/OSA (8105R) Rm 41243
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: (202) 564-6829

Submission Instructions for Electronic Application/Proposal Packages Using Grants.gov

The electronic package available through the <http://www.grants.gov/> web site must be used for electronic submissions. In order to view the application package, download the PureEdge viewer (hyperlink available under “Get Started” then “Get Started Step 2”). The application package may be quickly accessed from https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html using either the CFDA number of 66.510 or Funding Opportunity Number EPA-OSA-ORD-0601. It is recommended that you “Register to Receive Notification” of announcement updates.

The actual submission of an electronic application package must be made by an authorized organizational representative (AOR) of the submitting institution who is registered with grants.gov (most individual investigators will not be eligible to submit the application). Please see <http://www.grants.gov/>, “Get Started” for further information. ***The registration process may take a week or longer to complete.*** Please check with your Sponsored Programs or equivalent office to locate your AOR and see if your institution is registered. If your institution is not currently registered, encourage your AOR to begin the process immediately.

The complete package ***must be received by grants.gov no later than three months prior to the start of the conference for which funding is being requested and no later than 4:00 pm Eastern Time on January 18, 2007***, the solicitation closing date. (see “Submission Dates and Times”). An email will be sent by EPA to the applicant’s point of contact to acknowledge receipt of the application. The email will be sent from support@grants.gov; email to this address will not be accepted. If an email acknowledgment from EPA has not been received within 30 days of when the applicant submitted the package to Grants.gov, immediately contact the technical contact listed under "Agency Contacts" in this solicitation. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Documents must be submitted in Adobe Acrobat PDF format to maintain format integrity. Please submit the required documents as described below.

On the electronic Grant Application Package page, enter the Principal Investigator’s name, starting with the last name, in the “Application Filing Name” field.

A. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

1. Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- B. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
 1. Complete the form.
 2. If additional pages are needed, see “E. Other Attachments Form” below.
- C. Project Narrative Attachment Form
 1. Compile the Conference Plan as described in Section IV of this announcement followed by the Quality Assurance Statement into one document labeled *CWM Plan QA* and submit it as the “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File.”
 2. Prepare a document with your abstract as described in Section IV of this announcement, label it *Abstract*, and submit it as an “Add Optional Project Narrative File.”
 3. Prepare one document containing all Resumes followed by Current and Pending Support (see format example located at <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/forms/>), label it *Resumes*, and submit it as an “Add Optional Project Narrative File.”
 4. Prepare a document containing the Data Plan, label it *Data Plan*, and submit it as an “Add Optional Narrative File.”
- D. Budget Narrative Attachment Form
 1. Where possible, prepare one document for your Budget and Budget Justification (see format example located at <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/forms/>), label this document *Budget And Justification*, and submit it as the “Add Mandatory Budget Narrative.”
 2. If you cannot compile your Budget and Budget Justification into one document, prepare one document for each.
 - a. Label your Budget document *Budget* and submit it as the “Add Mandatory Budget Narrative.”
 - b. Label the Budget Justification document *Budget Justification* and submit it as an “Add Optional Budget Narrative” document.
 3. When submitting letters of intent, first refer to the “Letters of Intent/Letters of Support” paragraph under Section H (Guidelines, Limitations and Additional Requirements) for additional information. Letters of intent appropriate for inclusion in the budget justification are to be compiled into one document named *Letters of Intent* and submitted as an “Add Optional Budget Narrative” document.
- E. Other Attachments Form
 1. If Key Contacts Continuation pages are needed for the Key Contacts Form 5700-54, compile them into one document labeled *Contacts Continuation* and submit the document.
 2. Other appropriate documents may also be submitted here.

Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button will become active. Save your completed application package with two different file names before providing it to your AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced. Submission of the application package must be completed by your AOR.

Please close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. If you experience submission problems, please reboot your computer (turning the power off may be

necessary) and re-attempt the submission. If you continue to experience submission problems, contact grants.gov for assistance (Phone: 1-800-518-4726, Email: support@grants.gov). If submission problems are not quickly resolved, contact the ORD Call Center (Phone: 202-343-5500).

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Evaluation Criteria

Specific Evaluation Criteria - Applications that meet the threshold criteria in Section III will be evaluated against the following criteria. The criteria are weighted by points, and each subfactor under a criterion is of equal value (e.g., if the factor is worth 20 points and there are 4 subfactors, each one is worth 5 points).

1. Environmental Research Expertise- (30 points)

- a) The extent to which the applicant's academic publications and other academic work relate to the subject matter of the conference;
- b) The extent to which the environmental expertise of speakers and panelists in the specific topics proposed for conferences and/or their ability to attract key experts to make presentations/demonstrates at the conference is of the highest scientific or engineering quality;
- c) The extent to which the applicant is 1) an appropriate representative for the research issue(s) addressed in the proposal, or 2) likely to be viewed as an authority on the subject, or 3) able to establish linkages with an organization that is an appropriate representative or authority on the subject;

2. Programmatic Capability - (30 points) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates capabilities to successfully carry out the proposed project, taking into account the applicant's:

- a) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded efforts similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed effort.
- b) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations and submitting acceptable final technical reports.
- c) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the effort, and
- d) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the effort.

Note: Applicants who do not have any relevant past performance or reporting history will receive a neutral score for those elements of programmatic capability

3. Cost-Effectiveness - (10 points) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates how effectively conference funds will be used (i.e., value of the conference). For example, how does EPA assistance improve the productivity of a conference and result in appropriate environmental outcomes relative to larger or smaller numbers of attendees? Please note that

applications for multiple conferences, large conferences, and two or three-day conferences should justify the benefits of EPA funding the series, size or duration of the conferences.

4. Leveraging- (10 points) Under this criteria, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate (i) how they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources (e.g. support from a collaborating institution or organization) for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants. Applicants relying on co-funding should support their expectations) (e.g., based on past successes in obtaining multiple funding sources).

5. Social Value and Environmental Outcomes - (30 points) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates the environmental benefits the non-Federal scientific community will receive from the conference based on:

a) how the conference advances environmental sciences and engineering including the, environmental relevance of the topic and, as appropriate, the significance of the knowledge gap being addressed by the subject matter of the research conferences and the emerging topics that will be covered at the conference.

b) how the conference increases the quality of research in the field of Human Health and the Environment.

c) how the research presentation and training tools included in the conference meets the needs of a broad range of stakeholders.

6. Expected Results, Benefits, Outputs, and Outcomes- (30 points) The extent to which the applicant effectively describes the results expected to be achieved during the conference, (outputs) and the benefits of the results (outcomes) and how they will track whether they are achieving the outputs/outcomes. In addition, this factor will evaluate how the results link to EPA's Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture, and lead to solutions to environmental problems and improve the public's ability to protect the environment and human health. A clear, concise description will help OSA understand the merits of the conference.

B. Selection Process

Applicants will be ranked based on the above criteria by a panel of EPA scientists and engineers who will make recommendations to a senior ORD/OSA selection official who will make the final funding decisions. In addition to the results of the evaluation process and the recommendations of the review panel, in making the final selection decisions the selection official may also consider the following factors:

- Geographic diversity of the recipients and workshop locations;
- Topic diversity;
- Balance between: national and local workshops, workshop scope (single and multi year efforts, small and large workshops, single and multi-day activities)

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices

EPA will notify successful and unsuccessful applicants by e-mail. Applicants selected for funding will be required to provide additional information listed under “Award Notices.” EPA may require selected applicants to submit additional forms and certifications. The application will then be forwarded to EPA’s Grants Administration Division for award in accordance with the EPA’s procedures. The Agency is not obligated to fund selected applicants until a grant is awarded by EPA’s Grants Administration Division.

Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer can bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; preliminary selection by EPA does not guarantee an award will be made. The official notification of an award will be made by the Agency’s Grants Administration Division.

Nonprofit applicants recommended for funding under this BAA will be subject to a preaward administrative capability review consistent with sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8, EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/regulations.htm>).

Before or after an award, applicants may be required to provide additional quality assurance documentation.

Disputes

Disputes related to this assistance agreement competition will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures set forth in 70 FR 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Questions regarding disputes may be referred to the Eligibility Contact identified below.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

A. Approval of Changes after Award: Prior written approval is required from the EPA if there will be significant change from work described in the application. Examples of these

changes are contained in 40 C.F.R. 30.25. Note: prior written approval is also required from the EPA for incurring costs more than 90 calendar days prior to award.

B. Data Access and Information Release: If requested, after award, all data (including primary and secondary/existing data) must be made available to the EPA Project Officer without restriction. If requested, the data must be provided to the EPA Project Officer in a standard exchange format.

Congress, through OMB, has instructed each federal agency to implement Information Quality Guidelines designed to "provide policy and procedural guidance...for ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information, including statistical information, disseminated by Federal agencies." The EPA's implementation may be found at <http://www.epa.gov/oeiinter/qualityguidelines/index.html>. These procedures may apply to data generated by grant recipients if those data are disseminated as described in the Guidelines.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and the EPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. 30.36.

C. Reporting: If requested, a grant recipient must provide copies of any published proceedings, or journal article(s) resulting from any portion of the conference EPA funds.

D. The following clause(s), if appropriate, will be included in the grant agreements to be awarded under this BAA:

a. Human Subjects: A grant recipient must agree to meet all EPA requirements for studies using human subjects prior to implementing any work with these subjects. These requirements are given in 40 C.F.R. 26, referred to as the "Common Rule." No work involving human subjects, including recruiting, may be initiated before the EPA has received a copy of the applicant's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval of the project and the EPA has also provided approval. Where human subjects are involved in the research, the recipient must provide evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, including amendments or minor changes of protocol, as part of annual reports. Until further notice, EPA will not consider funding for research that involves intentional dosing human toxicity studies with pesticides".

b. Animal Welfare: A grant recipient must agree to comply with the Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544), as amended, 7 U.S.C. 2131-2156. The recipient must also agree to abide by the "U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals used in Testing, Research, and Training." (50 Federal Register 20864-20865 (May 20,1985))

E. Acknowledgment of EPA Support: EPA's full or partial support must be acknowledged in journal articles, oral or poster presentations, news releases, interviews with reporters and other communications. Any documents developed under the agreement for distribution to the public or inclusion in a scientific, technical, or other journal shall include the following statement:

This publication [article] was developed under a EPA Assistance Agreement No. _ awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has not been formally reviewed by the EPA. The views expressed in this document are solely those of [name of recipient] and the EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned in this publication.

A graphic that can be converted to a slide or used in other ways, such as on a poster, is located at <http://epa.gov/osa/guidance/images.html>. EPA expects recipients to use of this graphic in oral and poster presentations is expected.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Further information, if needed, may be obtained from the EPA officials indicated below. Information regarding this BAA obtained from sources other than these Agency Contacts may not be accurate. Email inquiries are preferred.

Eligibility Contact: Michael Bender: 202-564-6829; email: bender.michael@epa.gov

Electronic Submissions: ORD Call Center (Phone: 202-343-5500)

Technical Contact: [Michael Bender, Project Officer]; Phone: 202-564-6829; email: bender.michael@epa.gov